

shouldn't—this week the people and the employees should not be subject to this Government closing.

Q. Are you willing to have them over here as early as tonight, Mr. President?

The President. Well, I'd like to give them the chance to get back to me. I think it's important that I not talk anymore about the contents of my conversation until they have a chance to consider it and get back to me.

Q. Are you more encouraged, though, by what you heard in this phone call that the Government can get back to working 100 percent?

The President. I hope so. That's all I can say. I hope so.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:35 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House.

Memorandum on Federal Arrestee Drug Testing December 18, 1995

Memorandum for the Attorney General

Subject: Development of the Administration's Federal Arrestee Drug Testing Policy

Illegal drugs plague our communities, causing despair and illness, and, most importantly, contributing significantly to unacceptable levels of crime and violence. More than half of all individuals brought into the Nation's criminal justice system have substance abuse problems. Too often, the same criminal drug users cycle through the court, corrections, and probation systems still hooked on drugs and still committing crimes to support their habit.

We can and will continue to prosecute and convict these criminal drug users. Yet our criminal justice system must do more to try to reduce drug use. Across the country, employers have accepted their corporate responsibility to reduce the levels of drug use within their workplaces.

So too, the agencies of our criminal justice system must do their part, giving criminal drug users powerful incentives to stay off drugs by putting a high price on continued drug use. These incentives—commonly referred to as “coerced abstinence”—should be applied at the ear-

liest possible stage in a person's interaction with the criminal justice system—following arrest.

To ensure that we are doing all we can to break the cycle of drugs and crime, I am directing you to develop a universal policy providing for drug testing of all Federal arrestees before decisions are made on whether to release them into the community pending trial. I further direct that you establish a policy whereby Federal prosecutors will seek appropriate measures for arrestees who fail pretrial drug tests.

The Federal criminal justice system should serve as a model for State criminal justice systems—where the majority of criminal cases are processed and the cycle of repeat drug-related offenders is most evident. Therefore, I am also directing you to take all appropriate steps to encourage States to adopt and implement the same policies that we are initiating at the Federal level.

You should report to me in writing by March 31, 1996, on the specific steps you will take to implement this policy.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Remarks on Signing the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995 and an Exchange With Reporters December 19, 1995

The President. Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. Today, after two decades of gridlock,

I am very proud to be able to sign this legisla-